DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 233 866 RC 014 303

AUTHOR Iadicola, Peter

TITLE Peer Group Contextual Factors and Hispanic Student's Attitudes toward Their Own Ethnic Group.

INSTITUTION Indiana Univ., Fort Wayne.

SPONS AGENCY National Inst. of Mental Health (DHEW), Rockville, Md.
PUB DATE Jan 81
GRANT MH-27707-03
NOTE 24p.; Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the Southern Sociological Society (44th, Louisville, KY, April 1981).
PUB TYPE Reports - Research/Technical (143) -- Speeches/Conference Papers (150)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Anglo Americans; Case Studies; *Educational Environment; Elementary Education; Elementary School Students; Enrollment; *Ethnicity; *Hispanic Americans; Research Methodology; School Desegregation; *Socioeconomic Status; *Student Attitudes
IDENTIFIERS California

ABSTRACT

School environments dominated by high socioeconomic status levels have a negative effect on ethnic self-attitudes and on ethnic salience in self-identification, but Anglo-dominated school environments alone do not. In a test of the effect of different levels of Anglo dominance in schools on the ethnic self-attitudes of Hispanic elementary students, researchers used data from case studies of 10 desegregated California schools with varying Anglo and Hispanic enrollments. Teacher ratings indicated the schools' socioeconomic level and parents answered questionnaires regarding individual socioeconomic levels. Sampled students responded to two ethnic attitude measures: ethnic salience in self-description and an evaluation of ethnic self-attitudes. Correlation analysis of results indicated that higher percentages of Anglos and higher socioeconomic levels in the schools lowered the level of favorable ethnic self-attitudes. Regression analysis revealed a different pattern, indicating that although a higher percentage of Anglos in school caused more salient ethnicity among Hispanic students, school and individual socioeconomic levels had the opposite effect. That is, individual socioeconomic level could either insulate a student from or enhance the negative effect of high socioeconomic levels in schools. The results have implications for school desegregation and for cultural assimilation policy. (SB)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED233866

AUG 1983
RECEIVED
ERIC/CRESS

PEER GROUP CONTEXTUAL FACTORS AND HISPANIC STUDENT'S ATTITUDES TOWARD THEIR OWN ETHNIC GROUP*

"PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
Peter Iadicola
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

by

Peter Iadicola
Indiana University
Fort Wayne, Indiana

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF EDUCATION
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
✓ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official NIE position or policy.

January, 1981

Research findings reported in this paper were supported by Public Health Service Grant No. MH 27707-03 from the National Institute of Mental Health, Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. The opinions and conclusions stated in this paper are not to be construed as officially reflecting the policy of the granting agency.

*Presented at the 44th annual Meeting of the Southern Sociological Society, April 1981, Louisville, Kentucky.

RC014303

Most of the research on school desegregation has concentrated on investigating the impact of mixing students of different races on minority student's academic achievement. The results of this research has been generally considered inconsistent (St. John, 1975; Weinberg, 1977; Bradley and Bradley, 1979). Another large area of research has been the effect of school desegregation upon prejudicial attitudes toward minority populations. Again, the research results have been inconclusive (St. John, 1975; Weinberg, 1977). However, little research has been done on the effects of school desegregation upon minority student's attitudes toward their own ethnicity. Specifically, the question is asked what effect does the desegregated school environment have upon minority student's attitudes toward their own ethnic group, and how do these attitudes change for different levels of socio-economic status and percent Anglo of the school population.

There has been a history of research using black and white dolls to determine racial preference and identification of children. One of the earliest studies was conducted by the Clarks (1939). In that research, the Clarks found that black nursery school students who were in segregated schools were more likely to choose the black doll in tests of self identification than black students in nonsegregated settings. However, because of the small sample size, further replication was needed before one could be secure in the finding. Further support for these findings are present in research by Gregor and McPherson (1966). Gregor and McPherson (1966) studied racial attitudes in two segregated schools in the deep south. Ninety-five percent of the black students identified with the black doll and half preferred

the black doll over the white in the segregated schools. Greenwald and Oppenheim (1968) cleared up some of the questions regarding the large levels of misidentification of black students. Using what they referred to as a "mulatto" doll, the authors concluded that black children do not misidentify their race more frequently than do white students. However, Greenwald and Oppenheim did find the same general pattern of preference for the white doll by black students as found in earlier studies.

Porter's research in nursery schools indicated that black children "either wish that they were white or at least are ambivalent toward the fact that they are Negro" (Porter, 1971:113). Nevertheless, Porter contends that desegregation did not seem to have a negative effect upon racial self concepts. Rohrer's research (1972) on racial preference indicates an opposite pattern from Porter's conclusions. In researching racial preference among head start children in nonsegregated settings, Rohrer reports a strong tendency by black children away from their group.

There are very few studies that investigate the attitudes of Hispanic students toward their own ethnicity. In one such study, Cota Robles (1971) researched twenty Mexican-American head start children in Torrance, California and discovered that nearly three quarters of the students did not express a preference for the color brown in drawing self portraits.

It is not entirely clear from the research presented what one would expect from the desegregated experience in terms of ethnic attitudes. On the one hand, the goal of desegregation has been specifically defined in terms of assimilation; to change minority students, so that they may achieve in the school system (Gerard and Miller, 1975; Iadicola, 1977; Carlson, 1975). In accordance with this policy objective, one should place minority students in environments in which they are dependent upon Anglo students for rewards/status, thus contributing to their active assimilation in the

classroom toward white middle class standards of behavior. Given this orientation, one would expect that minority students in desegregated environments which are designed for the accomplishment of this goal would have less positive attitudes toward their own ethnic group than if they were in a segregated environment, one in which was not Anglo and high SES dominated where they would not be subject to a negative comparison with white, high SES students. One study investigating how assimilation is achieved in the desegregated elementary school has found that in order for the Hispanic student to become accepted into the Anglo peer group and to achieve in the Anglo dominated school, he or she must become ethnically outgroup oriented in terms of their attitudinal disposition (Iadicola, 1977). Another more recent study looked at the effect of percent Anglo and socio-economic status of the school upon status differences among sixth grade students. In this study it was discovered that as the school became more Anglo dominated and with higher levels of SES the more status inequality minority students experienced in these schools (Iadicola and Moore, 1979).

More recent writings on desegregation present a liberal, cultural pluralist model (Gordon, 1964; Rist, 1978; Mercer, Iadicola, and Moore 1980). This position supports a mixing of students in such a way that the school population approximates a balance between minority and majority students in the school. The central goal of this policy is to develop an environment of equal status relations among students of different ethnic backgrounds in order to improve intergroup relations and ethnic/racial tolerance in the general population (Allport, 1954; Rist, 1978). In this policy variation, the goal of assimilation is omitted or deemphasized. Nevertheless, Rist (1978) notes that most of the desegregation in this country is consistent with the assimilationist model, not the cultural pluralist goal.

The question posed in this research is what is the effect of different levels of Anglo dominance in the school upon Hispanic elementary school student s attitudes toward their own ethnicity. In accordance with the assimilationist goal of desegregation, one would predict that the greater the level of socioeconomic status and Anglo student representation in the school, the more negative attitudes toward ones own ethnic group.

DESIGN

Sample:

Data is derived from case studies of ten desegregated elementary schools in California. These ten schools were selected from a 1973-74 sample of 182 desegregated elementary schools for which profiles were available of student outcomes. Rank orders of the standardized residual scores on academic and mental health outcomes for each school and ethnic group were comprised. The final sample of ten schools utilized in this study included an equal number of schools with positive outcomes for Hispanic students and schools with negative outcomes for Hispanic students. Hispanic student enrollment ranged from 10 to 53 percent of the school population.

Operationalizations:

The percent Anglo in the school was obtained from the school records. The range of scores for the ten schools is 21% to 86% Anglo. The mean percent Anglo of the school sample is 53.62%, standard deviation is 23.02%. The measure of the school level of socioeconomic status is derived from two sources of data: (1) sixth and third grade teacher's ratings of occupation of the head of the household of each of the students in their class and (2) the percent of students of each ethnic group enrolled in the school. In order to approximate a measure of SES level of the entire school, it was necessary to combine both the information on the SES levels of third an

sixth grade students of each ethnic group with a measure of their ethnic representation in the school. The teacher's SES ratings were based on a scale of 0 to 5, with 0 for unemployed or on welfare, 1 for unskilled laborers, 2 for skilled laborers or tradesmen, 3 for clerical workers, 4 for managerial positions, and 5 for professional positions. In comparing the teacher's ratings of parents SES with parents of sixth grade student's own sample report of their occupation, the correlations were approximately .70 (see Iadicola, et al, 1979). Teacher's ratings of SES of parents of individual students from each ethnic group attending the third and sixth grade were summed, averaged, and then standardized against a sample of 10,000 students from 174 desegregated schools involved in an earlier study, with a mean of 50 and a standard deviation of 15 (Mercer and Nickles, 1974). A single school level score was computed for the standardized SES scores assigned to each ethnic group as follows: Anglo SES score x (percent Anglo students enrolled ÷ 100) + black SES score x (percent black students enrolled ÷ 100), etc, summed across all ethnic groups. The scoring range is 27 to 59. Higher score represents a higher socioeconomic status of parents of students enrolled in the school.

The measure of individual SES is derived from a questionnaire administered to the parents of sixth grade students selected for the student sample. Parent's response is coded in terms of Duncan occupational codes (Reiss, 1961). If the parents did not respond to the question, the teacher's rating (multiplied x 20 to maintain similar scale values) is used.

Two indicators of attitudes toward own ethnicity are included in the study: ethnic salience and an evaluative measure of attitudes toward own ethnic group. Ethnic salience is measured by a simple question asked on the student questionnaire. Students were asked to pretend they were describing themselves over the telephone to someone who did not know them. A column of

eleven lines beginning "I am _____" was provided. Students responded by writing in single work descriptors or descriptive statements on the lines. Ethnic group descriptors; black, Mexican, brown, etc. were scored by rank order of presentation down the lines, from 0 for not mentioned to 11 for mentioned first. Scores were then summed, a high score indicated a high level of ethnic salience in how the students described themselves.

Attitude toward own ethnic group is derived from a factor analyzed subset of questions asked of the students who attended an interaction game session. Students were told that they were going to see a series of pictures of school children for a brief period of time, and that after they had a chance to see the pictures, they were going to be asked questions about them. They were told that they would see the pictures once. They then observed a group of 8 inch by 10 inch photographs of children in general school settings (classroom, school yard, bus stop, etc.) which were pasted on a 3 foot by 4 foot piece of white cardboard. The cardboard was held up for them to see for approximately twenty seconds. The students were then given a set of drawings of faces of a boy and a girl of each ethnic group; Anglo, black, and Hispanic. The students were told that these were some of the children they saw in the pictures and that they were going to be asked some questions about them. Each drawing was labeled with a child's name; Jane and Scott(the names of the Anglo children), Pearl and Willie (the black children), and Maria and Juan (Hispanic children). Students were then asked to respond to the following statements and questions:

Some of the girls wore dirty clothes.

Some of the girls were helping a smaller kid who had fallen off the swings.

Some girls were causing trouble in class while the teacher was giving the lesson.

Some of the boys were pushing some little kids around.

Some of the girls were making fun of a first grade boy for being so little.

Some of the boys were throwing stones at cars passing the school yard.

Some of the girls were being praised by the teacher for writing the best papers in class.

Some boys were helping a small girl who fell off the slide.

Some students were chosen to help the teacher.

A child's name of every ethnic group was presented with each question. In the question about some of the girls wearing dirty clothes, the statement was followed with: "Did Jane have on dirty clothes? Did Maria have on dirty clothes? Die Pearl have on dirty clothes? In the statement about some boys throwing stones, the statement was followed by the questions: Was Juan throwing stones? Was Scott throwing stones? Was Willie throwing stones? The order of presentation of the child's name after the question was randomized to overcome problems of a possible response set occurring. Scores were coded 1 for a yes response and 0 for a no response, and then summed. The scale attitudes toward own ethnic group is composed of students response to the male and female pictures of the child of their own ethnic group, in this case the Hispanic children. The range of the own ethnic group scale is 0 to 9, a high score indicating a positive attitude toward their own ethnic group. Table 1 presents the factor analysis for each picture.

- - - - - - - - - -

Table 1 about here

- - - - - - - - - -

Analysis

The analysis was performed by assigning the school scores to the individual student and calculating Pearson correlation coefficients and

standardized regression weights on the individual student level.

The percentage of Anglo and the socioeconomic status of the student population are prerequisites for the success of the policy of desegregation as it is defined in terms of the goal of assimilation. "Many proponents of desegregation argue that as long as the black students in a given classroom are in a minority, majority white influence will prevail, thus changing the achievement-related conduct, the beliefs and the values of the black children in the class" (Gerard and Miller, 1975:17). Generally, the peer group contextual factors do serve as important mechanisms for the accomplishment of assimilation as defined in terms of changing student's attitudes toward their own ethnic group. Correlational analysis indicated that percent Anglo and the socio-economic status of the school both had significant relationships with ethnic salience and attitudes toward own ethnic group. As the level of percent Anglo and the socioeconomic status of the school increased, the lower the level of favorable attitudes toward own ethnic group, -.31 and -.44 ($p \leq .001$) respectively. This is the case for the Hispanic sample as a whole, as well as the Hispanic male subsample, -.30 and -.38 ($p \leq .01$) and the Hispanic female subsample, -.31 ($p \leq .05$) and -.52 ($p \leq .001$). There were no statistically significant correlations between the peer group contextual factors and ethnic salience for the Hispanic sample as a whole, nor for the specific subsamples. Individual socioeconomic status did have a negative relationship with ethnic salience for Hispanic female students, -.31 ($p < .05$). For female students from higher SES levels, ethnicity is not a salient factor in self identification.

- - - - - - - - - - - - - -

Tables 2 and 3 about here

- - - - - - - - - - - - - -

The regression analysis indicated a somewhat different pattern of results than was indicated in the zero order correlations. Specifically, in the case of ethnic salience for the sample as a whole, as well as the analysis for males and females conducted separately, the higher the percentage of Anglo students in the school, the more salient Hispanic ethnicity in self identification. On the other hand, school socioeconomic status and individual socioeconomic status had an opposite effect. The higher the levels of both individual SES and school SES the less salient ethnicity became in student identification. A different pattern is present for attitudes toward own ethnic group. For the evaluative dimension of ethnicity, percent Anglo of the school did not have a statistically significant effect. However, school socioeconomic status has a large negative effect upon Hispanic student's attitudes toward own ethnic group. This is especially the case for Hispanic female students, beta, -.66 ($p \leq .01$), although the relationship is also present for the Hispanic male students, beta, -.37 ($p \leq .05$).

Individual SES has a positive effect on student's attitudes toward own ethnic group. This is especially the case with Hispanic male students, -.31 ($p \leq .05$). High SES Hispanic male students appear to be insulated from the negative effect of a high SES school environment. On the other hand, low SES Hispanic male students are doubly effected by the high SES school environment in terms of attitudes toward their own ethnic group.

- - - - - - - - - -

Table 4 about here

- - - - - - - - - -

Discussion

In general, Anglo dominated environments alone have little impact on fostering negative ethnic self attitudes and appear to enhance ethnic

salience in self identification. However, high SES dominated environments have the opposite effect in fostering negative ethnic self attitudes and lessening the level of ethnic salience in self identification. It is important to note that Hispanic student's own SES level can serve to insulate the individual from the negative effects of a high SES school environment or may enhance the negative effect of school SES upon ethnic self attitudes. Thus, it is not the presence of Anglo students alone as much as it is the presence of high SES students which serve to negatively effect student's ethnic self attitudes.

What do these findings mean in terms of the goals of school desegregation? Specifically, to assimilate minority students, more emphasis should be placed on SES desegregation and less on ethnic desegregation. However, there are larger policy questions derived from these findings. In accordance with the liberal paradigm on race relations, the ultimate goal of the educational institution is to provide equal educational opportunity for minority students to achieve in the contest arenas of the meritocracy. However, if in order to achieve in the contests, minorities have to repudiate their cultural and ethnic background, this may be too large a price to pay for participation. In previous research I discussed the dilemma of school desegregation in terms of the incongruence of the two policy goals; assimilation and improvement of intergroup relations through equal status relations (Iadicola and Moore, 1979). In that research it became clear that the two goals could not be achieved within the same institutional setting. A school environment which is conducive to assimilation, one with a high level of Anglo students and a high level of socioeconomic status, created status inequalities between Anglo and minority students. However, through the policy of school desegregation as defined in terms of assimilation, improvement in intergroup relations

is achieved by the elimination of the culturally and ethnically distinct minority groups.

The larger questions this analysis does not address, however, becomes central given the implications of the findings; why is it necessary for minority populations to become assimilated in order to achieve in the meritocracy, what is the nature of the cultural deficits of these minority populations, and what aspects of their culture retard their success. The latter two questions speak to the central issues of the liberal paradigm. However, maybe we should reverse the questions and ask what is it about the political economy of the larger society which prohibits the incorporation of these cultural elements?

In terms of this last investigation alternative, one direction for this analysis would be to center attention on the power relations of the general society as they are defined culturally and investigate the process by which these power relations are maintained. There are two paths one could take in investigating the process of controlling dominated classes and cultural groups. One path searches for the way by which the dominant class and cultural group discriminates and controls the dominated classes and ethnic groups through the basic institutions of the social system (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977; Bowles and Gintis, 1976; Persell, 1977). A second path for the analysis would ask what is it about the basic organization of our society as defined in terms of the relations of production that there is a selection of certain cultural values for success to the exclusion of others. Both paths are necessary in order to achieve a complete understanding of race and ethnic relations in our society. The first investigates the methods of control and the second asks the question what is it about the social system which makes these specific systems of control necessary. However, until we

begin to ask these larger questions in a way which directs our search for answers to the structure of the society, we will not confront the central policy issues of race relations and other relations between the dominant and the dominated.

Table 1

Factor Analysis of Ethnic Picture for the Entire Sample (313)

Analyzed separately by sex and ethnicity of picture.

	Ethnic Female Pictures (Jane, Maria, Pearl)		
Questions	Hispanic	Anglo	Black
Girls wore dirty clothes	-.31	-.25	-.42
Girls helping a smaller kid	.27	.18	.24
Girls causing trouble	-.26	-.38	-.33
Girls making fun of little kid	-.23	-.23	-.31
Girls being praised	.52	.53	.41
Students chosen to help teacher	.27	.41	.30
	Ethnic Male Picture (Scott, Juan, Willie)		
Boys pushing little kids	.42	.65	.64
Boys throwing stones	.44	.39	.44
Boys helping small girl	-.46	-.41	-.30

Table 2

Zero Order Pearson Correlations between Peer Group Contextual Factors and Attitudes toward Own Ethnic Group for Hispanic Sixth Grade Students

	Individual SES	School SES	School Percent Anglo	Ethnic Salience	Own Ethnic Attitude
Individual SES					
School Ses	.09				
School Percent Anglo	.08	.76***			
Ethnic Salience	-.20*	-.13	.09		
Own Ethnic Attitude	.15	-.44***	-.31***	.03	
$\bar{X}$	19.36	44.76	55.66	2.16	5.32
SD	19.60	8.82	21.58	3.61	1.78
N	114	118	118	118	100

* $p \leq .05$
** $p \leq .01$
*** $p \leq .001$

Table 3

Zero Order Pearson Correlations between Peer Group Contextual Factors and Attitudes toward Own Ethnic Group for Hispanic Male and Female Sixth Grade Students

(Males - lower half of matrix, Females - upper half of matrix)

	Individual SES	School SES	School Percent Anglo	Ethnic Salience	Own Ethnic Attitudes	$\bar{X}$	SD	N
Individual SES		.03	.05	-.31*	.02	20.53	20.84	55
School SES	.16		.76***	-.21	-.52**	56.03	21.67	58
School Percent Anglo	.20	.76***		-.01	-.31*	44.83	8.93	58
Ethnic Salience	-.08	-.04	.20		.08	2.36	3.83	58
Own Ethnic Attitudes	.24*	-.38**	-.30**	.00		5.26	1.57	47
$\bar{X}$	18.27	44.70	55.30	1.98	5.38			
SD	18.48	8.80	21.67	3.40	1.96			
N	59	60	60	60	53			

* $p \leq .05$
** $p \leq .01$
*** $p \leq .001$

Table 4

Regression Analysis between Peer Group Contextual Factors

and Attitude Toward Own Ethnic Group for Hispanic 6th Grade Students

(Standardized Regression Coefficients and R^2s)

	Total Sample (N = 118)		Males (N = 60)		Females (N = 58)	
	Ethnic Salience	Own Ethnic Attitudes	Ethnic Salience	Own Ethnic Attitudes	Ethnic Salience	Own Ethnic Attitudes
Individual SES	-.19*	.19*	-.13	.31*	-.28*	.05
School SES	-.45**	-.49***	-.44*	-.37*	-.44*	-.66**
School Percent Anglo	.45**	.05	.56**	-.08	.32	.19
R^2	.14**	.23***	.14*	.24**	.18*	.28**

* $p \leq .05$
** $p \leq .01$
*** $p \leq .001$

Bibliography

Allport, Gordon

1954 The Nature of Prejudice. New York: Addison Wesley.

Bourdieu, Pierre and Jean Claude Passeron

1977 Reproduction in Education, Society, and Culture. Beverly Hills: Sage.

Bowles, Samuel and Herbert Gintis

1976 Schooling in Capitalist America. New York: Basic Books.

Bradley, Laurence A. and Gifford W. Bradley

1977 "The academic achievement of black students in desegregated schools: a critical review." Review of Educational Research 47:3:399-449.

Carlson, Robert A.

1975 The Quest for Conformity: Americanization through Education. New York: Wiley and Sons, Inc.

Clark, Kenneth B. and Mamie K. Clark

1939 "Segregation as a factor in the racial identification of Negro pre-school children: a preliminary report." Journal of Experimental Education 8:163.

Cota-Robles de Suarez, Celia

1971 "Skin color as a factor of racial identification and preference of young chicano children." Astlan:2:(Spring).

Gerard, Harold B. and Norman Miller

1975 School Desegregation: A Long Term Study. New York: Plenum.

Gordon, Milton

1964 Assimilation in American Life. New York: Oxford University Press.

Greenwald, Herbert J. and Donald B. Oppenheim

1968 "Reported magnitude of self-misidentification among negro children - artifact?" Journal of Personality and Social Psychology 8:1:49-52.

Gregor, James A. and D. Angus McPherson

1966 "Racial attitudes among white and negro children in a deep south standard metropolitan area." Journal of Social Psychology 68:1:95-106.

Iadicola, Peter

1977 "Desegregation as a model of assimilation." Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Sociological Association, Chicago.

Iadicola, Peter and Helen Moore

1979 "The desegregated school and status relations among anglo and minority students: the dilemma of school desegregation." Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Sociological Association, Boston.

Iadicola, Peter, June F. Lewis, Jane R. Mercer, Helen Moore, and Herbert L.

1979 Nickles III S.E.M.S. Technical Manual. Program Research in Multiethnic Education, University of California, Riverside.

Mercer, Jane R., Peter Iadicola, and Helen Moore.

1980 "Building effective multiethnic schools: evolving models and paradigms." in Walter G. Stephan and Joe R. Feagin School Desegregation: Past, Present, and Future. New York: Plenum.

Persell, Caroline Hodges

1977 Education and Inequality. New York: Free Press.

Porter, Judith

1971 Black Child, White Child: The Development of Racial Attitudes. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Rist, Ray C.

1978 The Invisible Children: School Integration in American Society. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.

Rohrer, Georgia Kasnetsis

1972 Racial and Ethnic Identification and Preference in Young Children. Doctoral Dissertation. University of California, Los Angeles.

St. John, Nancy Hoyt

1975 School Desegregation: Outcomes for Children. New York: John Wiley and Sons.

Weinberg, Meyer

1977 Minority Students: A Research Appraisal. Washington, D. C., U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. National Institute of Education.